

1 *Brookline Preservation Commission*
2 **MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 11, 2020 MEETING**
3 **Denny Room, Brookline Public Health Building, 11 Pierce Street**
4
5

6 **Commissioners Present:**

7 David King, Chair
8 Elton Elperin, Vice Chair
9 Jim Batchelor
10 Wendy Ecker
11 David Jack
12 Peter Kleiner
13 Richard Panciera
14 Elizabeth Armstrong, Alternate
15

Commissioners Absent:

16 **Staff:** Valerie Birmingham, Tina McCarthy
17

18
19 Mr. King called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
20

21 **Approval of Minutes**
22

23 Members reviewed and made edits to the draft minutes for the January 28, 2020 meeting at this
24 time. Mr. King moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. Panciera seconded the motion
25 and all voted in favor.
26

27 **Public Comment** (for items not on the agenda)
28

29 No public comment.
30

31 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – DEMOLITION**
32

33 **106 Sargent Road** – Application for the demolition of the house (Michael Bronner, applicant)
34

35 Application was withdrawn in writing by the applicant prior to the public hearing.
36

37 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**
38

39 **21 Mason Street (Cottage Farm LHD)** – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to
40 install exterior outdoor lighting (Peter and Nancy Saperstone, applicants).
41

42 Ms. McCarthy presented the case report.
43

44 Kelley Gusto, Sudbury Design Group, added that the top lantern does have a shield.
45

46 There was no public comment.

Mr. Elperin commented that he had visited the site at night, and that it was dark at the driveway entrance, and that there was certainly a need for lighting; however, Mr. Elperin stated he was not sure about the proposed post.

Ms. Armstrong asked for clarification about the proposed location of the driveway post. Ms. Gusto further explained the proposal.

Mr. Elperin asked if there would be any wall mounted lighting under the trellis on the garage. Ms. Gusto answered there would be.

Mr. King commented that he had no issues with the proposal.

Ms. Ecker asked if there was enough lighting on the stairs. Ms. Gusto answered that there was.

Mr. King moved to approve the application as submitted. Mr. Jack seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

151 and 153 Babcock Street (Graffam McKay LHD - Continuation) – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct two new residential structures, one on each vacant lot (151-153 Babcock Street LLC, applicant).

Ms. Birmingham presented the case report.

Colin Smith, architect for the project, remarked that he shared a lot of the Commission's prior concerns and that he did not feel the prior architect's elevations reflected the neighborhood. Mr. Smith stated that the biggest change was the reduction of the rear building, and that he had attempted to hide the garages from public view as best as possible. Mr. Smith further explained that he had worked to reduce the heights of the buildings, and had attempted to borrow and incorporate elements of the neighborhood into the design; additionally, Mr. Smith remarked that the applicants had met with the neighbors to discuss their concerns.

Paul Bader, 145 Babcock Street, stated that he was concerned with how close the front building is to the condominium building and asked about moving the driveway back to the right side of the lot to provide additional privacy. Mr. Bader stated that owners of the condominium building had signed letters with the same request.

An abutter at 143 Babcock Street stated that the building was too close to his and it would be better if the driveway was on the other side.

Mr. Elperin remarked that he appreciated the revisions and how much the scale has been reduced. Mr. Elperin asked how the parking under the front building would work. Mr. Smith remarked that his team had computer modeled it. Mr. Elperin stated that he would need to see something to be convinced. The Commissioners discussed the parking situation and numbers. Mr. Smith stated that he would look into it and clarify.

Mr. Elperin stated that for the rear building he preferred the gambrel design, but asked about the break on the right side. Mr. Smith commented that it was intended to resolve an internal stair issue.

95 Mr. Elperin remarked that the front building still had too much going on, and asked if it could be
96 simplified more.

97
98 Mr. Elperin commented that he agreed with the neighbor's concerns about the proposed location of
99 the driveway. Mr. Smith remarked that he thought the proposed driveway was more consistent with
100 the street, and that it was what the Commission had asked for previously. Mr. Batchelor remarked
101 that he felt the driveway location as proposed made sense with the overall pattern of the street,
102 however that he recognized the neighbor's concerns and hoped it could be resolved. The
103 Commissioners and the applicant discussed the proposed location of the driveway.

104
105 Mr. Smith commented that the designs were below the allowable FAR, and that the area had
106 historically been planned to allow for small, dense lots.

107
108 Mr. Jack stated that he felt the proposal was a tremendous improvement in comparison to previous
109 iterations, and stated that Mr. Smith could take a look at the site conditions and show the
110 Commission how the elevations would work.

111
112 Ms. Armstrong asked about the materials for the façade. Mr. Smith commented that the materials
113 were still being discussed and worked out, but that they were considering classic New England
114 fieldstone, as well as a mix of clapboards and shingles, and an asphalt roof.

115
116 Ms. Ecker commented that she thought the carriage house concept for the rear building was great.

117
118 The Commissioners and the applicant further discussed the issue of the driveway location, as well
119 as the scale of the buildings. Mr. Kleiner remarked that he felt the design and size was OK, but that
120 the subdivision was tough and that it was hard not to feel conflicted that this is how the street is
121 being developed. Mr. Kleiner further stated the way the lot had been subdivided had led to issues
122 and a train car effect on the front lot. Mr. King remarked that he felt the proposal was still too
123 dense for the site. Mr. Batchelor commented that the garages should come up to grade level, and in
124 doing so, the square footage in the units could be reduced; Mr. Batchelor further stated that he was
125 concerned about the change in the topography. Mr. Jack asked if the train car effect mentioned
126 would be as noticeable as the houses are so close together.

127
128 Mr. King asked if it was possible to move the front building away from the right side property line.
129 Mr. Batchelor stated the applicant could explore obtaining zoning relief for pushing the front
130 building away from the property line with support from the Commission. The Commissioners
131 further discussed the idea of moving the front building away from the right side property line, as
132 well as bringing the garages up to existing grade level or eliminating the garages and having
133 surface parking.

134
135 David Colbert, 163 Babcock Street, asked about the massing and volume of the rear building, and
136 stated that he felt it was too big.

137
138 An abutter at 145 Babcock Street remarked that the driveway should be evaluated, and that the
139 trees should be preserved.

140
141 Mr. Batchelor moved to continue the application and that the applicant should explore moving the
142 front building further to the left and request any zoning relief necessary to do so or look at flipping

the design and driveway to the other side, as well as study a solution for the parking and garages without deep excavation for the driveway. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion. Ms. Ecker commented that variances are difficult to obtain in the Town. Mr. Batchelor amended the motion to include that the applicant should look at how to preserve the trees on the lot. All voted in favor.

16 Prescott Street (Cottage Farm LHD - Continuation) – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install new landscape features and exterior outdoor lighting (Miguel and Laura De Icaza, applicants).

Ms. McCarthy presented the case report.

Matthew Cunningham, Matthew Cunningham Landscape Design LLC, stated that they had done a little research in regards to the generator and explained additional information that had been provided to them by the manufacturer about the specifications and noise levels. Mr. Cunningham remarked that the owner had looked into a battery operated generator, but that it was too costly.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Elperin commented that it was still more lights than one would need, and that he was unsure about the generator and its acoustics.

Ryan Wampler, Matthew Cunningham Landscape Design LLC, stated that the generator was a modest scale for the size of the house, and that the generator had been positioned as far away as possibly could. Ms. Armstrong asked if the Commission had a policy about generators. Mr. Batchelor remarked that there was a policy for AC condensers. The Commissioners discussed the generator, specifically its location, acoustics, and screening. Mr. Panciera commented that the area was noisy so it might not be an issue. Mr. Kleiner stated that he felt this discussion was more zoning related, and that the Town had regulations that would control the Commission's concerns in regards to acoustics. The Commissioners further discussed the generator.

Mr. King moved to approve the generator with the requirement that it be screened with a wood fence that was as tall as the generator with shrubs on the outside of it, and have an acoustical treatment. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion. The Commission voted 4 in favor, 2 against, and 1 abstain. The motion passed.

Mr. Cunningham remarked that they had reduced the amount of proposed lighting by 25%. Additionally, Mr. Cunningham stated that the owners would be entertaining a lot, but that it was highly unlikely that all of the lighting would ever be on at once.

Ms. Ecker remarked that it was a lot of lighting in the rear yard. Mr. King stated that he was against any uplighting of vegetation, and asked about the visibility of the rear yard. Ms. McCarthy explained the visibility. The Commissioners and the applicant discussed the use of uplighting, as well as the path lighting. Mr. King mentioned that the Commission was currently working on Design Guidelines for lighting in a local historic district and that uplighting is inappropriate. Mr. Batchelor remarked that he felt the path lighting was fine, but was not in favor of and very hesitant to allow uplighting; additionally, Mr. Batchelor stated that the Commission had not allowed uplighting of landscaping in a recent case. Mr. Elperin commented that path lighting would be OK as a compromise.

191
192 Mr. Batchelor moved to approve the lighting as proposed except the uplights. Mr. Wampler asked
193 if they could replace the proposed uplights in the rear yard with five path lights. Mr. Batchelor
194 amended the motion to include that the applicant could use path lights in the rear yard, and that
195 final details were to be reviewed and approved by staff. Mr. King seconded the motion. All voted
196 in favor.

197
198 **17 Manchester Road (Graffam McKay LHD - Violation)** – Application for a Retroactive
199 Certificate of Appropriateness to replace wood gutters and downspouts, in addition to the fascia
200 and soffit, with aluminum K style gutters (FRSRoofing, applicant).

201
202 Ms. Birmingham presented the case report.

203
204 Phillip Almeida, FRS Roofing, introduced himself.

205
206 There was no public comment.

207
208 Mr. King asked for clarification of what the materials were prior to the violation. Ms. Birmingham
209 clarified existing conditions prior to the violation.

210
211 The Commissioners discussed the violation, and remarked that they did not have review over the
212 in-kind work. Mr. Batchelor commented that the gutters that had previously been wood should go
213 back to wood. Additionally, the Commissioners stated that the gutters should go back to how they
214 were prior in terms of design.

215
216 Mr. Batchelor moved to require that the gutters that had been wood prior to the violation be
217 replaced with wood, and that the downspouts be round as they were before. Mr. Elperin seconded
218 the motion and all voted in favor.

219
220 **17 Manchester Road (Graffam McKay LHD)** – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness
221 to replace the balustrade on the front porch (Mr. Handyman, applicant).

222
223 Ms. Birmingham presented the case report.

224
225 Joe Zeliger, Mr. Handyman of Greater Newton, stated that the only change would be the height of
226 the balusters as required by building code and the Building Department.

227
228 There was no public comment.

229
230 Mr. Panciera inquired about the bead at the bottom edge, and if that would be replicated. Mr.
231 Zeliger answered that it would be. Mr. Zeliger also commented that the columns need to come up
232 as well, and that the caps at the top would also be matched.

233
234 The Commissioners and Mr. Zeliger discussed the extent of rot of the existing front porch.

235
236 Mr. Panciera commented that it was unfortunate that the building code was requiring the change in
237 height, and that it was not correct on historic structures. Ms. Birmingham restated a conversation
238 staff had had with the building department regarding this application. Mr. Panciera remarked that

239 there was a lack of understanding among code officials with respect to building code and
240 historic buildings.

241
242 Mr. Elperin moved to approve the application as submitted. Mr. Batchelor seconded the motion and
243 all voted in favor.

244
245 **10 Lenox Street (Cottage Farm LHD)** – Request to amend a Certificate of Appropriateness to
246 replace the approved proposed stucco finish of the new elevator overrun with cement board panels
247 (studioMLA Architects, applicant).

248
249 Application was withdrawn in writing by the applicant prior to the public hearing.

250
251 **NEW BUSINESS AND UPDATES**

252
253 There was no new business at this time.

254
255 Mr. King moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Batchelor seconded the motion and all voted
256 in favor. The meeting was adjourned.